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Conversations Militaires. A conversation book for soldiers, with notes and vocabulary, by E. E. Patton. D. C. Heath & Co., 1918. 16mo. VI + 85 pp. 40 cents.

There are seventeen of these military conversations followed in each case by notes giving explanations and additional vocabulary, and covering the most important phases of the American soldier's life in France. The most admirable feature of the book is the excellent quality of French employed. The French lieutenant Jean J. Labat, who writes a short preface, tells us the language is good, and to the American teacher, as well, the character of the phrases reveals them as real French and not such stuff as the most of our conversation manuals are made of. But it is just this virtue which will prevent the book's being widely used in our colleges at least. For the ordinary S. A. T. C. student, if I may generalize from my experience at the University of Chicago, it would be a question simply of learning the conversations by heart and being fitted to speak that much and no more. The notes do not add words enough, verbs enough, to admit of the construction of many additional sentences by the student. He must already have a more considerable knowledge of French than most of our students, in the training corps, possess. And after all, what most of our soldiers need in the way of French, is just what the rest of us need in France—the ability to ask for ordinary things, to reply to ordinary questions; in short, to carry on the ordinary conversations.

On the other hand, for liaison officers between French and American commands, the book is excellent, both as to situations foreseen and phrases chosen. It will also be valuable as a dictionary of reference to those of us at home who have met and are meeting every day in the French books about the war, technical expressions which we do not know the exact equivalent for, and which we are glad to find explained.

In a book of such excellence, it may seem invidious to pick out small faults, but I cannot help wondering why the author every now and then renders the French pronunciation of some word by English equivalents, though the student is evidently expected to be able to pronounce French, since there is no systematic attempt at phonetics. Moreover, the English equivalent does not usually give the French pronunciation. For *civil*, *see-veel* might pass (p. 28), but *gay* does not render *gué* (p. 20); *komplo*, *complot* (p. 29); *pye*, *paille* (p. 38); nor *swee*, *suit* and so on in instances too numerous to note in this short review.

The proof-reading is good. I note only one error—*carbrurateur* for *carburateur* (p. 61).

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Goethes Hermann und Dorothea, with a life of the author in German, appendices, German exercises, questions, notes, and vocabulary by Julianne A. Roller. Boston, Allyn and Bacon, 1917. XXX + 302 + 107 pp.

Outwardly this edition presents a most attractive appearance. The press-work is exceptionally good and in the way of illustrations there are not only the

customary Ramberg pictures but the biographical sketch is aptly and strikingly adorned with well-executed half-tones and the several cantos bear as head-pieces reproductions of the Simmons mural paintings in the Library of Congress.

According to the Preface this edition "has been prepared with the special aim of bringing this classic within easy reach of high school pupils, even those in the two-year course." Against such a doctrine the reviewer would enter a strong protest, a protest which may perhaps lay claim to special timeliness in that within the next year or two a tendency will doubtless manifest itself to turn for purposes of school reading from the modern Germany to the older Germany of Goethe, Schiller, and the Romanticists. Such attempts to read classics with pupils who are still struggling with the very rudiments of the language is pedagogically thoroughly unsound and can but result in failure. What it has led to in the present instance may be seen from such admonitions as "inveted order is regularly used in conditional clauses when *wenn* is omitted" (Elegy, l. 39; Canto I, 88, etc.), and from the habitual supplying of an omitted auxiliary, a practice that the Notes of Canto VI indulge in no less than sixteen times. Pupils unfamiliar with such elementary rules or without feeling for such basic constructions are in no way prepared to approach what is after all from the point of view of language as style one of the most difficult of Goethe's poems.

The editor, who, to judge from the numerous Latin citations, has approached German by way of Latin, has in some respects shown considerable pedagogical tact and skill, so e. g. in the linking up in the *Einleitung* of the various incidents in Goethe's life that might interest the younger pupil. And yet, this very *Einleitung* shows conclusively that her knowledge of German, in itself not inconsiderable, and her command of the subject matter in its manifold phases are for editorial purposes altogether inadequate. The following quotations will serve to substantiate these assertions: "Er gehörte also der Klasse der Menschen." "Als er acht Jahre alt war, konnte er schon . . . Griechisch schreiben." (p. X) "Von den neueren Werken war Klopstocks Messias sein Liebling." (p. XIV) "Heidenröslein, das auch seine neue Liebe entdeckt." "Nicht der geringste Einfluss auf Goethe war seine Liebe zu Friederike, die schöne Tochter des Pfarrers Brion." "Eine der schönsten (d. h. Gedichte) ist." (p. XVI) "Götz folgt Shakespeare in Form. Es ist . . . (p. XVIII) "Auf seiner Einladung." (p. XIX) "viele seiner schönsten Lyriken." "zum Adel erhöht." "Die Anfänge von Faust . . . fallen in diese Zeit (die ersten zehn Jahre in Weimar)" (p. XX) "Er wandte sich jetzt (nach Schillers Tode) zur Wissenschaft." "Der zweite Teil (des Faust) erschien. . . (1831) kurz von seinem Tode." "Vater und Mutter . . . waren schon lange fort (d. h. gestorben)" (p. XXIV). "Dazu hatte er abe eine Antwort" (p. XXVII). "Als Jüngling wünschte er sich Professor an einer Universität zu werden." "Auch in der Optik, . . . Geologie . . . war er nicht nur Gelehrter, sondern auch Bahnbrecher." (p. XXVIII) "Seine Lieder allein erklären ihn 'den deutschen Dichturfürsten' . . . und seine Romane stehen noch jetzt unter den besten." "Seiner war ein verzeihender Geist." (p. XXXIX).

The commentary is in the main well balanced and not without merit. The text itself is printed with scrupulous care, an observation which does not, however, cover the *Elegie*, the forty-five lines of which show two misprints

(ll. 23 and 31). In perhaps a dozen instances omissions and even emendations have been made to bridge over places that might prove awkward in mixed high school classes. Opinion will differ as to the necessity of these. To the reviewer for one the substitution of *die kränkliche*, etc., for *die Wöchnerin* in numerous places seems mere prudery.

There is an extensive apparatus in the way of Appendices (A-H, pp. 201-301) differing very widely in value and character. Appendix A gives a classified list of common quotations; B-E supply the literary-critical matter that usually finds a place in an Introduction; F consists of a bibliography, G of questions on the text (in German); H of Exercises. In both G and H unidiomatic German abounds. To take only a single example, the list of grammatical terms on p. 283 has such expressions as *Gemeinschaftsbefehl* (polite command), and *Aktiva* and *Passiva* as plural forms in the *grammatical* sense. The rather pretentious chapter on Meter (pp. 252-259) gives no evidence of a real understanding of the subject. One wonders whether the editor knew that the *Elegie* prefacing the poem is written in the elegiac distich when that fact is nowhere referred to and when in the note on p. 255 *Alexis und Dora* is cited as an example of that form of verse. Similarly, there is no mention of the fact that Voss's *Luise* is written in the hexameter, and Goethe's use of this meter in his own poem is attributed in at least one place (p. XIV) directly to the influence of Klopstock.

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NOTES AND NEWS

The admirably planned Albany meeting of the New York State Modern Language Association, the program of which was printed in the November of the JOURNAL, had to be abandoned on account of the Influenza epidemic. We hope, however, that most of the papers that were prepared may be read at the various sectional meetings and eventually be published.

The annual meeting of the Association of Modern Language Teachers of the Middle States and Maryland was held in Princeton on November 30. The chief business transacted was the acceptance of the plan for the New Federation forwarded to the President by Professor Robert H. Fife, Jr., of Wesleyan University. Excellent papers were read by Professor Davis of Rutgers, Dean Murray Brush of Johns Hopkins, Miss Fernandez of the New Utrecht High School, Brooklyn and Dr. Thatcher Clark of the Ethical Culture School, New York City. All speakers dealt of course with the general subject of the program.

Will the modern languages play a larger or smaller part in American education after the war? How can we best take advan-